

Joint Capital Planning Minutes – March 10, 2016

Present: Doug Slaughter, Chair, Steve Braun, Peter Hechenbleikner, Connie Kruger, Claire McGinnis, Tamson Ely, Sonia Aldrich, Rick Hood, Catherine Appy, Jonathan McCabe, Bernie Kubiak

Meeting was called to order at 9:34 AM

Presentation on 1% for Art: Rene Theberge, Eric Brody

The intent is to use art to enhance public spaces. The proposal is a result of much discussion on what the Public Art Commission should undertake. Further discussion with focus groups found considerable support for the proposal along with an integrative strategy, collaborating with other groups and as a potential economic development approach.

Massachusetts, unlike other states, does not have a “percent for art” style program. The idea is to provide funds for aesthetic improvements to public spaces at only an incremental cost to capital improvement projects. The proposal would be focused on capital improvement projects over \$100,000.00

Discussion regarding what constituted “capital” and that the proposal should be limited to buildings and facilities, excluding equipment purchases, Community Preservation Fund projects, funds used to match grants and apply only to projects supported through town funds raised through taxation. The possibility of a value of less than 1% was raised. That might prove acceptable but the majority of this type of program uses a 1% figure. Concerns and questions were raised by committee members regarding sufficient funding, total cost of the project, administrative concerns. How the money would be managed, how funding decisions would be made, local artist preference and procurement laws complied with were raised as concerns. Town counsel is going to review the proposed art bylaw and any changes will be forwarded to the committee by McGinnis.

Five Year Plan Summary

The plan comes into balance for 8% of the tax levy; goal will be to build it to 10%.

Hechenbleikner recommends going to a 10 year planning document to get the full impacts of projects falling in and out of the plan, better project out equipment replacement and capital maintenance projects.

The draft plan adds \$1.5 million for Wildwood; assume debt exclusion passes in the Fall as part of a larger borrowing for the school. The plan shows the drawdown of that debt exclusion and the library debt exclusion is shown as well. There was discussion regarding the library cost and the need for firmer estimates. Other adjustments include a \$13,000 reduction in funds for planning. North Common work is delayed. As for the LSSE request, Hechenbleikner believes the DPW should make decisions about vehicles. Kruger wants to be certain that LSSE needs are met, would like to see an overall vehicle plan, and was disappointed in the narratives provided by the DPW. Discussion as to the level of detail needed in requests, DPW in particular, and the need for DPW to function as fleet manager for the town. The DPW director will be asked to review the LSSE vehicle request to see if it’s satisfactory. McGinnis took vehicle plans from DPW, Fire and Police, take plans from other departments and see if they can be merged into a

coherent plan. Hechenbleikner noted there is a standard methodology but it may take some work to set DPW up as fleet manager.

Debt projections are summarized on the last page of the draft capital plan. For the next meeting, review the chart, go back through the presentations, and send specific recommendations to McGinnis by Tuesday to be distributed the following day. The 1% for Art proposal will be distributed, with cost estimates. The Capital plan assumes Fort River will be in use until FY '19, so the roof replacement estimate will be removed. The same approach will be used with the Jones Library and Wildwood – capital maintenance items will be removed.

No votes were taken on any discussion items.

Braun moves to adjourn, seconded by Kruger. Vote is unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,
Bernie Kubiak

Documents referred to:
1% For Art handouts
Draft Five Year Capital Plan dated 3/8/16